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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PBTS](#) [MARR](#) [GG](#) [MD](#) [RS](#)  
SUBJECT: SUMMIT TIDBITS: PUTIN WITH SAAKASHVILI AND VORININ  
REF: STATE 79597

Classified By: Ambassador William J. Burns. Reason: 1.4 (b, d)

Summary  
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¶1. (C) Russian MFA and Security Council readouts of President Putin's meetings with Presidents Saakashvili of Georgia and Voronin of Moldova at the Commonwealth of Independent States Summit stressed their constructive and friendly atmosphere. Concrete results were not noted, however. The MFA has been given carte blanche to negotiate relaxation of Russian sanctions on Georgia. End Summary.

Georgia  
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¶2. (C) Both MFA and Security Council told us the June 9 Putin-Saakashvili meeting was "constructive." DFM Karasin highlighted for the Ambassador Putin's reaffirmation of support for Georgia's territorial integrity, adding that the principle must be applied "consistently" (i.e., in Serbia). Karasin said the GOR is looking at ways to ease sanctions against Georgia, but stressed there is no timetable for doing so.

¶3. (C) MFA 4th CIS Deputy Director Tarabrin added that Putin has given the MFA carte blanche to negotiate relaxation of the sanctions. He said steps in that direction will still need Putin's personal approval, but implied that Putin would bless any agreement reached between FMs Lavrov and Beshuashvili. Normalization will be slow, according to Security Council official Andrey Kuzin. Tarabrin gave an example of the pace to be expected: the Verkhniy Lars/Kazbegi border crossing, closed by the Russians last July for "repairs," will reopen only in the fourth quarter of ¶2008.

¶4. (C) Kuzin stressed that normalization can only come with serious negotiations, and that means compromise on both sides, not just "smiles and pleasant table-talk." We pointed out that it is the Russian side that has taken concrete actions against Georgia -- sanctions, border closures, etc. -- while the Georgian behavior to which Russia objects has been rhetoric. "Words are deeds," Kuzin replied. "The tonality Georgia uses is the problem."

¶5. (C) Kuzin, who was in the Russian needs assessment delegation to South Ossetia last month, faulted the Georgians for the recent flare-up over interruption of the flow of water to Tskhinvali. "The Georgian farmers may tap into the pipes every year," he said, "but now the Georgians have trumpeted their new administration in their enclaves; that administration needs to keep order." Kuzin regretted that Minister for Conflict Resolution Antadze had not accompanied the Georgian delegation to Tskhinvali. Russia will continue to fund humanitarian assistance, he said, and will continue

to invite Georgian participation in its missions.

Moldova

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¶16. (C) Kuzin said the Putin-Voronin meeting was very brief, and could not be construed as a "negotiation." We outlined for him the contents of the Burns-Karasin letter on internationalizing the Transnistria PKF (reftel). Kuzin had heard of the letter, but had not seen it. Kuzin asked why one would need to change the PKF, since it has succeeded at its task. We pointed out that a PKF in accordance with the Istanbul Commitments can be of great benefit. Kuzin said this issue is now bound up with the "refusal" by new members of NATO -- those who have joined since 1999 -- to accede to CFE. Kuzin ended the discussion on Moldova by urging the U.S. to talk directly with the Tiraspol authorities as we frequently talk to those in Sukhumi, Tskhinvali and Stepanakert.

BURNS